

Evening Telegraph MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1870.

OUR WAR NEWS.

We take pride in referring both to the quality and quantity of the news that we have been able to set before our readers from the commencement of the war between France and Prussia to the present time. The facilities we enjoy by means of our contract with the Associated Press enable us to publish exclusively, every afternoon, complete and satisfactory reports of the progress of events at the seat of war, and to furnish the public with the very latest intelligence. On Saturday an "extra," containing King William's despatch announcing the surrender of the Emperor, first conveyed to the citizens of Philadelphia the information of the great event that will probably influence the destinies of Europe for many ages to come, and from 10 o'clock until after dark THE EVENING TELEGRAPH office was besieged by a crowd of citizens eager to hear the latest details of the surrender. The vast resources and facilities of the Associated Press for the collection and dissemination of news have been shown in the most conclusive manner possible during the past six weeks, and our columns are proofs not only of the variety of information forwarded by its reporters, but of the fact that all the important news about the war has been given to the public first by means of its cable telegrams. The New York Associated Press is composed of the leading journals of that city, the Tribune, Times, Herald, World, Sun, Journal of Commerce, Evening Post, Commercial Advertiser, and Evening Express, and in this city it is represented by the North American, Inquirer, Ledger, Press, Age, Record, and German Democrat. It does not require any demonstration to prove that a combination like this, which also includes the leading journals of the South and West, must possess facilities for collecting news superior to any other that can under any possible circumstances be formed. The Associated Press has been organized for years, and its system has been perfected by long experience. Its reporters are fully trained to their business, and they are scattered over every quarter of the world with instructions to forward promptly information of every event of the slightest public interest. It may not be amiss here to allude to some captious criticisms that have been made with regard to the vague and unsatisfactory rumors that have frequently been sent over the cables during the progress of the war between France and Prussia, and for which the Associated Press reporters have been blamed. The experiences of our own war, when news of the movements of the hostile armies was by no means as hard to obtain as it is in Europe, demonstrated to the public that a large portion of the intelligence sent from the seat of war must of necessity consist of mere rumors. The reporters pick up information wherever and whenever they can, and if they were to stop to sift truth from falsehood, and to wait until they had verified the facts in their possession, the public would frequently not receive news of the utmost importance and interest for days, and even weeks, after the event had occurred. That this is not the way to supply the public craving for the latest information is so self-evident to readers of newspapers can be relied upon to dent that it needs no argument, and the make for themselves the necessary allowances in case of obscure or vague rumors. The reporters only do their duty by sending at the earliest possible moment every scrap of news that comes into their possession, even if one despatch contradicts the other. The public of Philadelphia have shown their appreciation of THE EVENING TELEGRAPH as the only afternoon paper in the city that publishes the Associated Press despatches, and therefore the only one that contains full and reliable war news, in the manner most gratifying to us—by eagerly buying up the large editions which we issue every afternoon; and in the future, as in the past, our columns will be found to contain the latest and fullest reports of the great events that are transpiring in Europe.

NAPOLEON'S DOWNFALL.

The defeat of the French armies is so sudden and overwhelming that the incredulity with which the news of Napoleon's surrender was first received may well be pardoned. Even now, since the intelligence is fully confirmed, men eagerly inquire how it became possible that martial France could be so terribly humiliated in a war provoked by herself. The peculiarities of her position, however, with the fearful blunders committed since the present contest commenced, and the extraordinary vigor infused into the campaign by the Germans, go far to explain the results which have astonished the whole civilized world. The Germans have strictly and sternly followed the old Spartan rule of making a soldier of every citizen. Neither wealth nor influence could procure exemption from their inexorable conscription, and for years fight to a foreign country has been the only possible method of avoiding the fixed term of military service. When a people trained in this manner were suddenly summoned to arms in defense of a cause which enlisted their warmest sympathies, Napoleon called millions of desperate, determined, intelligent, and well-disciplined foes into the field who were ready to dare everything in defense of the Fatherland. A mighty people rose up against him, and he vainly expected to subdue them by his regular army. He had been preaching peace and restraining the martial instincts of France. He had been more anxious to fill his treasury with money paid to secure exemption from conscription than to swell the ranks of his regular forces. He discouraged and prevented the free use of arms by the body of the people, and his incessant fears of revolun-

tion made him intensely hostile to every organization that tended to educate the populace for military duty.

This system, continued during his whole reign, laid the groundwork of the extraordinary spectacle of all Germany fighting against less than half of France. It superinduced the fearful disproportion of strength which has been apparent in every battle, and it paved the way for the inevitable victories which have been won by the German armies.

Independent of this fundamental error, nearly every other conceivable mistake has been perpetrated. The French made an admirable disposition of their forces near the frontier for an offensive campaign, but the worst possible disposition for the defensive campaign which was thrust upon them, and if the Prussians had dictated their movements they could scarcely have been more favorable for the invaders. The ex-Emperor undertook to command his army without comprehending the duties of that responsible position. He rejected the advice of able generals and followed the counsels of propinquy courtiers. Even after the dangerous absurdity of his interference was perceived and acknowledged, he hung round the camps as a constant incubus. Thus Bazaine was forced to detach three regiments at a critical juncture in the battle near Metz to protect his precious person, and it is said that shortly before the late collapse he requested MacMahon to detach 30,000 troops to ensure the safety of the Prince Imperial. Such petty trifling and officious intermeddling is enough to defeat the best army in the world.

Paris has been too much absorbed for several weeks past in preparations for her own defense to render effective aid to the armies in front. A city which expects to be invested, which is planting thousands of cannon on her walls, throwing up earthworks, soliciting food from all quarters for her own sustenance, and which feels that every man she can muster may soon be needed for her own defense, has but little time or disposition to strengthen armies hundreds of miles away; and the perils of the capital have kept back supplies and reinforcements from both MacMahon and Bazaine.

In brief, Germany was ready for the war, while France was not, and the blows have fallen so thick and fast that the French have had no time to repair their original deficiencies. While they are enrolling new recruits their old armies are being demolished, and while they are devising plans of defense, their strongholds are falling into the hands of the enemy.

For the moment, the Cabinet at Paris avows a determination to continue the fight to the bitter end. But when the French people fully realize the extent of the late calamity, and learn that the Prince Imperial, as well as the Emperor, has fallen into the hands of the Prussians, and that MacMahon's whole army has surrendered, it is difficult to comprehend how authority can be maintained by any ministry chosen by the defunct dynasty. The demand for a radical change of government will hourly gain strength, and the issue will loom up whether the nation is to make a sudden peace or whether it is to renew the battle under the banner of a republic.

THE DESTINY OF FRANCE.

NO NATION has drank deeper than France of the intoxicating draught of military glory, and none has been more thoroughly humiliated by invasion. In the hour of dire distress she is capable of forming the most desperate resolutions, and as nearly all things in politics and war are possible to her, the whole civilized world will await with intense interest the culmination of the startling events which have demoralized and stunned, without destroying her. What is to be her future? Can she, profiting by experience, at least realize her fond dream of a stable republic, or must she again become the prey of anarchy or despotism? Will she cower in submission before forces which have vanquished her most powerful armies, or will she now, as in 1792, unexpectedly find a safe reliance at last in volunteers called suddenly from their workshops? The Prussians have achieved wonders—everything has gone down before them—but as the season advances and September mellowing into October they may have the elements as well as French soldiers to fight. Can Paris hold out long enough to find an ally in biting frosts and blinding storms? These and other questions of equal import must be answered before the war is fully over, and before its consequences can be thoroughly understood.

OBITUARY.

Count de Flahault de la Billarderie. The death of Auguste Charles Joseph, Comte de Flahault de la Billarderie, a French General, Senator, and Chancellor of the Legion of Honor, is announced by cable. He was born in Paris on the 20th of April, 1785. His father was a general officer, and the son at the age of fifteen enrolled himself in a corps of mounted volunteers, which afterward accompanied the First Consul into Italy. His promotion was very rapid. He held the office of aid-de-camp successively to Murat, to Berthier, and to Napoleon. He distinguished himself in Portugal, Germany, and Russia. In 1815 he was made General of Brigade, and afterward General of Division, with the title of Count. During the one hundred days he was a peer of France, and in that capacity upheld the proposal in favor of Napoleon II, made by Lucien. On the second list of the Bourbons his name was on that of exiles, but it was stricken from it through the influence of M. de Talleyrand. In 1830 M. de Flahault resumed his place in the French army, and then became peer. In the same year he was attached to the person and household of the Duke of Orleans. He was intrusted with several diplomatic missions, including the important embassy to Vienna. This office he held from 1842 to 1848. On the 5th of December, 1852, after the re-establishment of the Empire, he became a member of the Senate. On May 5, 1858, he received the cross of the Legion of Honor, and on the 28th of January, 1864, was made Grand Chancellor of the order. From 1815 to 1850, during the time of his voluntary exile

on account of the return of the Bourbons, he lived in England, and while there married the daughter of Admiral Keith, who was an English peeress, with the right of transmitting her peerage to her eldest son. The family, however, have all been daughters. The eldest daughter is married to the Marquis of Lansdowne.

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